

A large, ornate, light-colored floral border frames the central text. It features symmetrical, flowing lines with leaf-like motifs at the top and bottom, and a central vase-like shape that tapers to a point at the bottom.

The Peace Conference

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1905

E. W. White

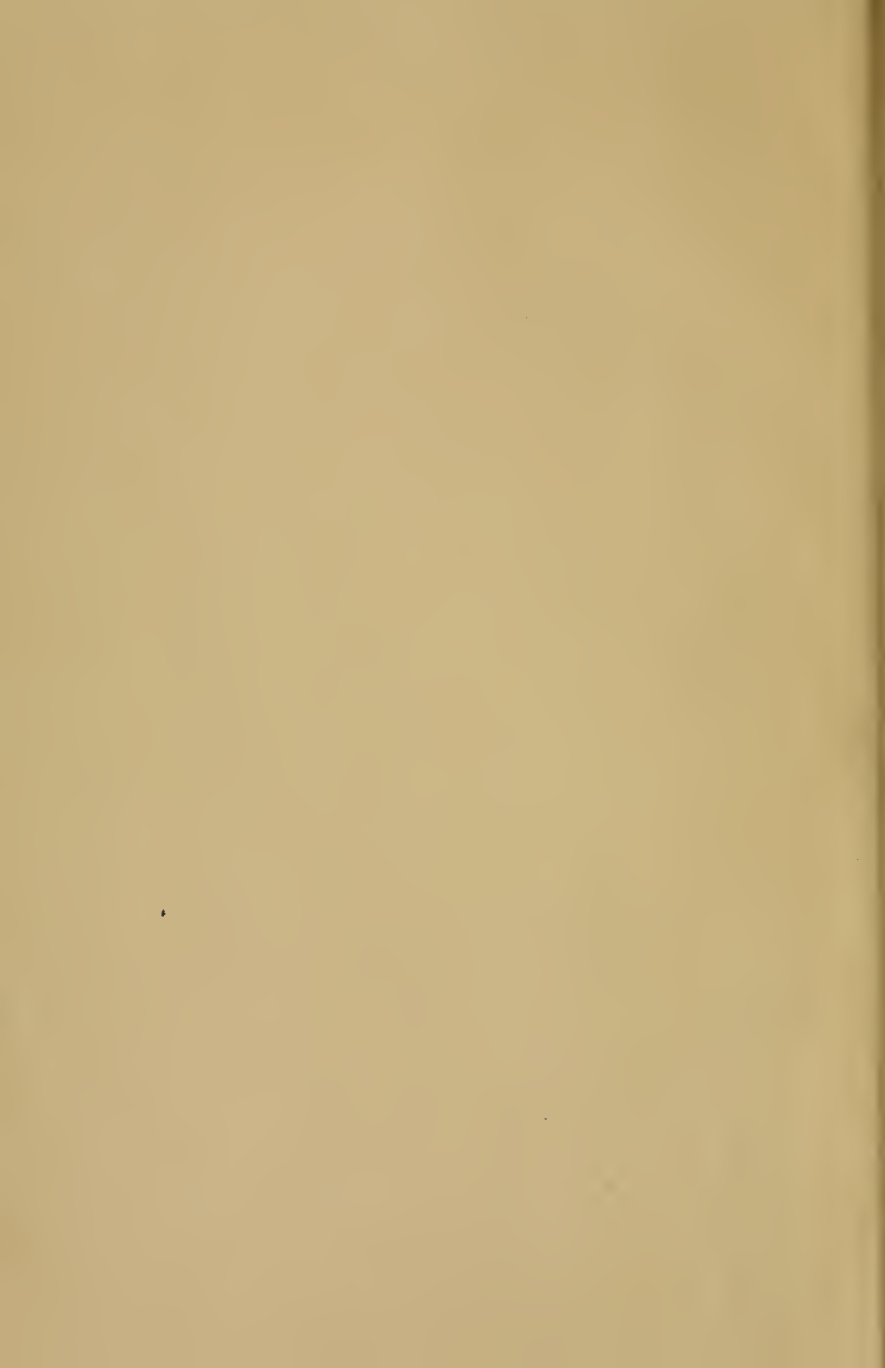


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THE PEACE CONFERENCE

The Peace Conference

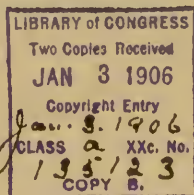
A Poem by
C. V. WHITE



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DEDICATED TO
THE AMERICAN DELEGATES OF THE
INTERNATIONAL PEACE
CONFERENCE,

Called by the Emperor Nicholas II of Russia, and
Opened at The Hague, May 18, 1899.

*Andrew D. White, Ambassador at Berlin,
Stanford Newell, Minister at The Hague,
Seth Low, Columbia University,
Capt. A. T. Mahan, U. S. N., retired,
Capt. William Crozier, U. S. A.,
Fred W. Holls, Secretary, New York.*

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

TIME—ANNO DOMINI, MDCCCXCIX
PLACE—THE HAGUE

The Powers are convened to consider the Czar's proposal for a general disarmament. There are present the Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Germany, the Queen of England, the Queen of Holland, the Mikado, the President of France, the President of the U. S., and numerous Ambassadors, Consuls, Secretaries, Messengers, etc.

Rulers of States,
Princes and Potentates,
Whom seals and insignia adorn,
All who parade a jeweled brow,
All ye unto the purple born,
All Royalties, attend me now.

I bring to you
A proclamation new,—
A scheme whose purpose and intent
Is to promote disarmament.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

By virtue of having taken the initiative in the movement, the Czar presides, and outlines his policy.

Unto the end
That Sovereigns may lend
Their princely offices and state
This glorious scheme to consummate.

The Czar has a dream of Universal Peace and incidentally suggests the Millennium.

That wars may cease,
And Universal Peace
May bear the message of her birth,
And spread her blessings o'er the earth.

Spero meliora.

I would disband
The troops in every land;
And Arms I would eliminate
From Principality and State.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

I would confine
The navies, yours and mine,
And put a limitation both
On their continuance and growth.

I would discard
Those instruments abhorred,
Which, in a moment of held breath,
Can send a thousand souls to death.

I would create
A Board to arbitrate,
Than which Tribunal there should be
None higher in authority.

I would intrust
This Body to adjust
All disagreements that arise,
And all disputes to harmonize.

To apprehend
A failure in the end,
To give ourselves to doubts and fears,
Is wisdom learned not of our years.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

And to endure
An evil we could cure,
Is unpropitious to our star,
Unworthy of the kings we are.

Noblesse oblige.

Since we by fate
Are called to high estate,—
Since we are overlords of all,
Regents of wood, rulers of wall,—

Let us discharge
Unto the world at large,
With heart and spirit free and frank,
The obligations of our rank.

Upon us too,
As kings and princes true,
As guardians of the peace devolves
The carrying out of high resolves.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

We should give heed
To every want and need;
We should ameliorate all woe,
And reconcile foe unto foe.

This is indeed
My doctrine and my creed;
And be it voted down today,
Or be the issue what it may,—

Here I commit
And pledge myself to it;
And frankly I demand and ask
Co-operation in the task.

*John Bull. The Powers seek to controvert the
Czar's argument, and cite past incidents in defense
of the institution of war.*

Would Pyramid
Have risen as it did,
Or Sphinx, that lone guardian of graves,
Had Egypt's kings not had their slaves?

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Ivanovitch.

There hangs and drops
Around the great Cheops,
Thought such as move to the sublime,
And mystery as outlives Time.

The Czar shows the total indifference of the rulers to the condition of their captives, whom they made slaves.

The Pharoahs,
Under whom they arose,
Heard not the curses of their slaves
Pronounced upon their sumptuous graves.

The wrath of the Lord is kindled against Pharaoh. The Rod, in the hands of Moses, becomes an avenger.

Would the Lord God
Have given to the Rod
The power to make the waters part
Had Pharaoh hardened not his heart?

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

The Mikado.

The infidel raises a question of morals.

Where would have been
Redress for Helen's sin,
Had no appeal to arms been made,
And had the gods not given aid?

Ivanovitch.

Had she not flown
We never would have known
The epic and the verse supreme,
For Homer would have had no theme.

Her guilt is part
Of learning and of art;
Nor could less beauty than was hers
Inspire the Greek hexameters.

Sanctioned by gods
And goddesses, whose nods
Inflamed the brave Achilles' wrath,
Or marked Ulysses' wandering path,—

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Casus belli.

If punishment
For sin was ever sent,
If war was ever justified,
It was the one for Helen tried.

But curse the dower
Of Beauty and its power;
Cursed be the man and his caress,
And cursed be her unfaithfulness.

Brother Jonathan.

Would Persia proud
The Grecian seas have ploughed,
Had she not thought her armament
Surpassing and omnipotent?

Ivanovitch.

Darius bore,
And Xerxes even more,
Such hatred to the Grecian states
As tempted them unto their fates.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

It was decreed
That Asia should be freed
From bigotry and despotism,
From occult myth and mysticism.

Jean Crapaud.

If for his son
Philip, of Macedon,
Had not prepared and formed the State,
Would Alexander have been Great?

Ivanovitch.

In any age
On History's written page,
Would Phillip's son have left his name,
And himself given unto fame.

His was a mind
Unto the great inclined;
A soul possessed in high degree
Of every princely quality.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

To boastings true
He boldly marched into
The temple of the god divine,
And forced an answer from the shrine.

He pulled down towns,
And took from kings their crowns;
He took from them their priceless gem,
Yea, by his strength he plundered them.

And conquering still,
At pleasure and at will,
He marched unto Arbela's plain,
And broke the despot's power in twain.

Though in his path
There followed curse and wrath,
Yet learning and enlightenment
Were introduced where'er he went.

Thus have reforms
Been wrought by force of arms;
Thus has enlightenment been spread,
And carried to the living dead.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Cousin Michael.

Should conquests stir
The calm philosopher,
Or yet the gleam of blade or steel,
Rouse in the orator new zeal?

Ivanovitch.

Peace may engage
Philosopher and sage,
But look to see the orator
Moving Assemblies unto war.

And one of these
Was that Demosthenes,
Who, scorning Macedonian bribes,
Broke into bitter diatribes.

His mind foresaw
The subtle scheme to draw,
And Hellas to assimilate
Into the Macedonian State.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

But matchless art,
Outpoured from patriot heart,
Could not turn back the bayonet,
Nor Phillip from his purpose set.

John Bull.

When Carthage rose
In might against her foes,
Themselves allies and friends of Rome,
Could Roman troops remain at home?

Ivanovitch.

Than Sicily.
Pride of the Inland Sea,
The eye of mortal never scanned
A fairer or a richer land.

With such a prize
Before their covetous eyes,
Neither Rome nor Carthage could restrain
Her love of conquest and of gain.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

It was Rome's boast
That never, though she lost,
Had she deserted faithful friend,
Or failed her allies aid to lend.

On this pretext,
Professing to be vexed,
She marshaled out her chivalry
To drive the foe from Sicily

The circumstance,
With deep significance,
And far-reaching results was fraught
Unknown at the time, and unthought.

It marked Rome's first
Insatiable greed and thirst,
Her first ambition and desire
For foreign conquest, world empire.

Thrice was it waged,
And thrice hell fairly raged
Between the boasted sons of Mars
And Carthage, no less famed in wars.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Perchance 'twas fought
That the world might be brought
Resourceful Hannibal to know,
Or the genius of a Scipio;

Howe'er this be,
This bygone century,
This age of war, and hate, and strife
With mighty men and deeds is rife;

It gives to us
Immortal Regulus,
Sublime in courage when he went
To torture and death-punishment.

It tells us how
The passion and the vow
Great Hannibal did dedicate
From early infancy to hate.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Delenda Karthago est!

It tells how great
Was the censor Cato's hate
When he, unto the Roman world,
"Delenda est Karthago" hurled.

It tells how brave
Those women were who gave
Their glorious locks to cut and braid
For Carthage's defense and aid.

Mynheer Closh.

If no appeal
Had been to arms or steel,
Would Cæsar still have shown his might,
Or Rome have risen to such height?

Ivanovitch.

In any chance,
Or adverse circumstance,
The Cæsar would have mastered fate,
For he was destined to be Great.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

And Heav'n had willed
That Rome, the seven-hilled,
Should rise from that proud eminence
To pow'r and great magnificence;

To might and pow'r
Unknown until that hour,
When Roman standards were unfurled,
And Empire claimed o'er all the world.

It is not strange
Within this world of change,
That, having run their little day,
Kingsdoms and states should pass away;

Fuit Ilium.

But when the eye
Beholds such glories die,
Such grandeur and such splendors fade,
As the Eternal Rome displayed,—

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Like Scipio
We marvel at the blow,
And ask, with feelings insecure,
How long our Kingdoms will endure.

Brother Jonathan.

The Gothic host,
The European ghost,
Say, where would they have found a home,
Had they not wrested it from Rome?

Ivanovitch.

Like unto wine,
(Sweet product of the vine!)
Fermenting till it overruns,
Were Goths, and Visigoths, and Huns.

The age was crude,
The men and manners rude,
And warring was the prop and stay
Of states and kingdoms in that day.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Cousin Michael.

When to the Moor
The Christians left their shore,
How could the valiant Charles Martel
Unarmed, turned back the Infidel?

Ivanovitch.

He has done well,
Has noble Charles Martel;
He who could strike the Saracen
A blow that seemed the strength of ten.

It was a test
In which was manifest
The power of the Holy Ghost
Over Mohammed and his host.

The Infidel.

When William claimed
That The Confessor named
Him heir unto the English throne,
Could Saxon set aside their own?

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Ivanovitch.

The Duke was bold
Such promise to uphold,
And by the force of blade and blood,
To dare to make his title good.

But England's need
Was growing great indeed,
For such a strong hand to protect,
And such a leader to direct.

For lowly churl
Would not obey his earl,
And Saxon Harold was too weak
To hold the doughty lords in check.

The Mikado.

Without the aid
Of arms, how could the Maid
Have realized her hopes and dreams,
And crowned the Dauphin, King, at Reims?

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Ivanovitch.

Joan of Arc
Saw visions in the dark,—
Heard Voices bidding her advance
To the deliverance of France.

No matter which,
Saint, heretic, or witch,
The fair Pucelle was under a spell
Which served her cause and country well.

Her zeal inspired,
And the French nation fired,
With enthusiasm to a degree
That won a glorious victory.

John Bull.

When Spain with curse,
And Inquisition worse,
Sent the Armada forth in might,
Had England aught to do but fight?

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Ivanovitch.

In danger's hour
It is the right of Power,
And of the Sovereign, State, or Lord,
The people to protect and guard.

Brother Jonathan.

When stamps were sent
For deed and document,—
When troops and brigantines of hire
Were sent to do the King's desire,

In honor then
To country, God, and men,
Pray, what could Congress do but charge
Cursed tyranny against King George?

Ivanovitch.

When it was thus
When tax iniquitous
Was forced upon the Colonist,
It was his duty to resist.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

For it is just
When Kings betray their trust,
When Tyranny perverts the laws,
To take up arms in Freedom's cause.

The Infidel.

*Excitement runs riot. The delegates are upon
their feet gesticulating, and vociferating wildly.*

With Spain harassed,
And with the Tiber passed,
With Austria battling for her claims,
And Moscow given to the flames,—

Mynheer Closh.

The Czar vainly endeavors to command order.

With Prussia rent,
And in a wild ferment,—

Brother Jonathan.

With England given to alarms,
What could the Powers but take up arms?

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

John Bull.

And what recourse,
Except to arms and force,
Had England when her foes approached?

Jean Crapeaud.

Had France when England's power encroached?

Shade of Jefferson Davis.

When in the South
It ran from mouth to mouth,
Of how the North had sworn to free,
And give the black man liberty,—

Shade of Abraham Lincoln.

When in the North
The cry and word went forth,
Of how the South was up in arms,
And beating drums, and sounding 'larms,

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Ye gods, declare
If other way was there!

John Bull.

Aye, England found another way,
But yet the price of blood would pay!

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Dea ex Machina.

At this juncture a figure clad in soft flowing robes of white, wearing a laurel wreath upon her brow, and bearing a spray of palm in her extended right hand, enters the Council Hall, and walks majestically to the throne.

I bring to you
A new command and true,—
The Vision that the Prophet saw,
The Voice the son of Amos heard,—
From Zion shall go forth the Law,
And from Jerusalem the Word.

This is the Law,—
Your swords ye shall not draw,
For they who take the sword and fight
Shall perish of the sword's own might.

There are two fears
That haunt man through his years;
Two mysteries confusing brain,
Two cruelties producing pain.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

The mystery
Of nature's cruelty,
Such as when Etna's mountain glows
With flame of earth's convulsive throes.

And ever near
Is the disturbing fear,
That, challenging his God and fate,
Man will return to savage state.

But Etna's fire
With fear should not inspire;
Nor is it part of God's wise plan
That man should fear his brother man.

Curse on the age
That lent itself to rage,
When brothers took their battle-stand,
And fought their brothers hand to hand.

Curse on the part
That new inventive art
Has in creating rivalry,
And increase of mortality.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Tempora Mutantur.

As alchemy
To modern chemistry,—
As was old astrology
Unto the new astronomy,—

So even are
The olden modes of war—
The spear, the arrow, and the bow—
Unto the perfect means we know.

A curse upon
The rapid-firing gun!
On the inhuman dum dum's throes,
On submarines, and torpedoes!

When Cuba, foiled,
For Freedom toiled and toiled,
Uprose a Nation in her might
And joined the weaker in the fight.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

And e'en today
There may be those to say,
That it was all humanity,
And liberty, and Cuba free.

But if ye must
Lay in the dirt and dust,
One man to set another free,
Pray, where is the humanity?

For at command
Many, within that land,
Have laid aside forevermore
The arms and weapons that they bore.

Fides Punica.

The contest o'er
Linger ye on the Shore
To show that your humanity
Was but pretence and mockery?

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

The evil genius of France.

In this same hour
Behold a Nation's power,
Employed to her eternal hurt
The ends of justice to pervert.

A secret sold,
By some one learned and told,
The perjury of witnesses,
Atonement for a crime not his.

Alas! in France
Has he no hope or chance,
Against the lies and perjuries
Of his determined enemies?

Is death, slow death
By pestilential breath,
Upon the Devil's lonely Isle,
The fate reserved for one so vile?

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Are arms the cause,
Perversion of the laws,
Connivance of the Government
To shield the ones not innocent?

When, when will cease
This menace to your peace?
When will ye break the strain and stress,
And spirit of aggressiveness?

How long, how long,
Will ye behold the strong
Do causeless battle with the weak,
And on them dreadful vengeance wreak?

This is the Word,—
Behold the living Lord
Shall come in Peace and Righteousness,
His people to redeem and bless.

And in that day
Many shall come and say,
Let us go up to our reward,
Unto the mountain of the Lord;

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

The Prophet of Israel.

Nation shall not
 'Gainst Nation rise and plot;
Their land shall not run red with gore,
Nor shall they learn war any more;

 Their pointed spears
 That brought to foes such fears,
And humbled many lofty looks,
Shall be made into pruning hooks;

 And they shall beat
 Their swords beneath their feet;
And of them peaceful plowshares form
When all the nations shall disarm;

 When to His ain
 The King shall come again,
The nations He shall judge among,
And shall rebuke them of their wrong;

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

And in that day
Forsooth, shall pass away,
The burden of distrust and hate
Of England's foe across the Strait;

The Powers then,
Shall not, please God and men,
Oppressed, benighted China land
Partition with their ruthless hand;

The Northern Bear
Shall hearken to the prayer,
And shall no more oppress the Finns,
But shall repent him of his sins;

Siberia vast
He shall not hold so fast;
And troops he shall not mobilize,
E'en though Korea be the prize;

The Japanese
Beyond their inland seas
Shall not adventure forth to fight,
However just their cause or right;

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

Nor shall the Boer
Be driven from his Shore;
For England's onward march shall cease,
When she has learned the joys of peace;

The Infidel
Shall come beneath the spell,
And all despoiliation cease
Of ancient Art, of modern Greece;

And there shall sound
O'er Pyramid and Mound,
O'er watchful Sphinx, and silent Tomb,
To the invader's march the doom;

That day shall bring,
As though on angel wing,
The inspiration and the word,
To kindred Kaffir and to Kurd.

To sate the greed,
To take beyond the need,
To dupe and overreach is base,
E'en in the meanest of the race;

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

But when the Kings
Resort unto such things,
How much more reprehensible!
How much more indefensible!

And every strife
Has cost us many a life;
And words that rose with heated breath,
Have signed many a soul to death.

How vain, how vain,
It is to strive for gain.
For that which marks the beast and brute
Is not a kingly attribute.

The Heav'n for height,
The sun and stars for light,
The mountain for its mist and snow,
The sea for ceaseless ebb and flow,—

The foam to curl,
The oyster for its pearl,
The shell to whisper of the sea,
And reproduce its melody,—

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

The Spring for birth,
The Summer for its mirth,
The Autumn for its death and dearth,
The Winter for its home and hearth,—

The line for length,
The circle for its strength,
The square and cube for symmetry,
And space for all eternity,—

The plane to slope,
The entering wedge to ope,
The cog to take the water's drift,
The turning of the screw to lift,—

The camel for
The desert sand and bar,
The ship to plough with restless keel,
The track to span the earth with steel,—

The chrysalis
For metamorphosis,
The cocoon for the finest silk,
The mother for the offspring's milk,—

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

The soul to long,
The heart to burst in song,
The mind to reason and adjust,
The body to return to dust,—

Mankind to give
While he doth move and live
His days to glorify and bless
The Prince of Peace and Righteousness,—

Kings their high place
To occupy by grace,
And to inspire to noble things,
Serving alone the King of Kings;

And in their zeal
To make known and reveal
The essence of Divinity
That leaveneth their destiny.

Lord God, we pray,
Reveal Thyself today,
And in Thy boundless love and might
The nations of the world unite.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE

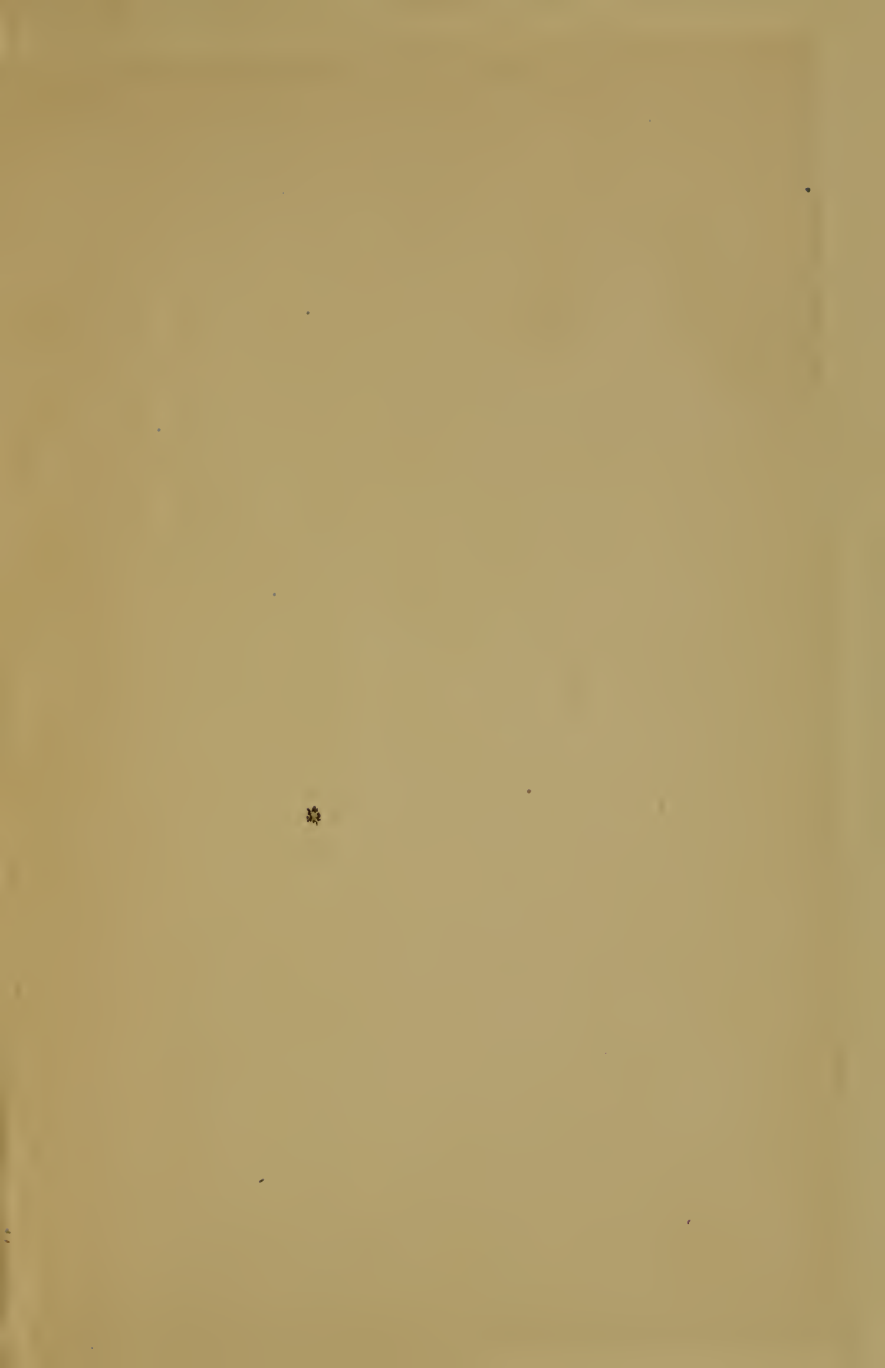
That wars may cease,
And Universal Peace
May bear the message of her birth,
And spread her blessings o'er the earth.

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L'ENVOI

Lord God, endow
Us with Thy blessing now,
And plenteous Peace the whole world o'er
Establish Thou forevermore!

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